



City of Chicago Animal Inspection ReportDate: 11/18/10Event/location: Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus Inspection- United Center

Inspectors: (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

(b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

(b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

Chicago Police Department Attorney), (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

Tracy Thomson (USDA, APHIS, Animal Care), Tami

Howard (USDA, APHIS, Animal Care), Denise Sofranko (USDA, APHIS, Animal Care),

(b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c), and approximately 4-5 members of the Chicago

Police Force.

Purpose: USDA and City of Chicago follow-up inspection

Prepared by (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

Event Schedule:

Arrival time: 6:35am congregation

6:45am: Checked in with United Center Security. The security team called Mr. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) to gain access to the United Center and animals. Mr. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) requested that the inspectors use street parking only and granted access only if accompanied by a Ringling Brother Personnel. Members of Ringling Brothers (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) denied access until the general manager of Ringling Brothers had arrived. Approximately 7:23am the general manager was phoned by Tracey Thomson and a voice mail was left. After receiving no response, a second call was placed approximately 7:45am. At 8:15am access was granted to the inspection team and a tour of the elephants was given by Joe Friscoe.

The elephants were inspected first as staff members preceded with their daily routine. Observations regarding standing posture and body condition of the elephants were made. Ringling Brothers personnel were attempting to film the inspection with sound. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) explained that it was illegal in Illinois to film an inspection with sound. The video camera was turned off and closed. Approximately 9:30am to 10:00am, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) was asked to be removed from the elephant inspection by the general manager of Ringling Brothers, as Ringling felt she might be a radical elephant advocate.

At 10:30 the animals were prepared for the pre-show. At this time the City of Chicago members completed an inspection of the other circus animals. Post inspection, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c), and the Chicago Police force members left. All other inspectors were accompanied to the Ringling Brothers train for elephant car inspections. Upon returning, gait analysis and foot inspections were performed, and the veterinary medical trailer was inspected. Their attending veterinarian was present for questioning. During the inspection, it was asked that Ringling go about their daily routine so observations could be made about routine. At 2:30pm the elephants were denied their scheduled exercise for the day due to the inspection team's presence on the premises. The inspection was concluded at approximately 3:30pm.

Elephant inspection:

By the time of access, the elephant "barn" had been cleaned. The 10 elephants were divided into 4 pens outlined by rope. These ropes are not hot-wired. All elephants have been trained to stay within the pen limits. Pens have been measured and recorded by the USDA inspection team. Mother and calf, Bonnie- 16y and Barrack-1.5y, occupied the first pen at the west end of the tent. In the second pen was one heavily active 5y male juvenile, Irvin. Three adult females occupied the third (Asha- 9y, Rudy-9y, and Kelly Ann-15y), and 4 female elephants occupied the fourth (Juliet-18y, Sara-9y, Karen-41y, and Nicole-34y).

There were elevated wooden platforms at the North aspect of the pens where the elephants are tethered for the night. The South half of the enclosure was bare asphalt. In the afternoon a thin layer of wood shavings are spread on the asphalt. At the time, the elephants were being bathed and groomed for the 10:30am performance. The elephants were being scrubbed with "Elephant Wash" and rinsed off by hoses. High-powered leaf blowers were used to dry the elephants after their baths. Waste was quickly removed as it was produced by the elephants. An attempt was made to collect urine by buckets once an urination posture was noted. Per Ringling veterinary staff, no medications were currently being administered to any elephant.

Upon entrance into the elephant barn, excessive repetitive head bobbing and swaying was noted by Asha, Rudy, Kelly Ann, Juliet, Nicole, Karen, and Sara. Nicole's forelimbs appeared mildly swollen. Multiple of her nails were cracked with evidence of a ruptured abscess on the right forelimb toenail #3. There is no evidence that they nail has been trimmed as is normally performed to treat foot abscesses. Karen's right forelimb nail #5 had a potentially active abscess. Again, there is no evidence that the abscess has been trimmed and treated. Karen, Nicole, Bonnie, Kelly Ann had overgrown toe nails and footpads. Rudy had a crack on her right hind limb #3 toe nail. Juliet had two visible cracks on her back hind limb toe nail #2 and back hind limb toe nail #4. Juliet's toe nail #4 looked to potentially be abscessed.

Bonnie, Karen, and Nicole also demonstrated excessive wear of the foot pad on the lateral aspects of the rear limbs. Juliet did not place full weight on her right hind limb, even when asked to raise her forelimbs for inspection. The displaced weight to the caudal aspect (heel) of her foot is consistent with pain that is likely caused by her cracked/abscess toe nail. While standing, multiple elephants were noted to have exhibited mild swelling of one hind limb. This may be due to overly tightened overnight tethers, but tethers had been removed by the time of the observations. Multiple tails demonstrated angular bends within the mid-tail coccygeal vertebrate (Barrack and Irvin). (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and the attending veterinarian, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c), claimed that this was a congenital deformity.

Gait analysis was performed and each elephant was asked to lift each of their feet for inspection. Multiple elephants appeared to walk with a mild to moderately stiffened gait. Nicole's forelimbs were moderately swollen and her gait was stiff in the forelimbs and left rare limb. Karen appeared mildly stiff in the back hind limbs, and juliet did not apply

full pressure to her right rare limb. One elephant (Asha, Rudy, or Kelly Ann) exhibited three horizontal linear scars over the left lateral thorax in addition to a vertical, depigmented linear scar on the right bottom inner ear pinna. Per trainer, they have been acquired over the years from sharp edges on trains and rough-housing with other elephants. Another within this group showed an open abrasion over the right dorsal eyelid. The trainer claimed that this was a result of elephants playing with enrichment substrate with one another. An open abrasion on the medial aspect of a right rare limb was also noticed on one elephant within this group. Barrack's inferior eyelid sported a dermal cyst that has previously been diagnosed as a dermal cyst by a board-certified ophthalmologist. During the inspection, the USDA veterinarians took precedence in ideal views for gait analysis. Please refer to the concurrent USDA report for a more thorough gait analysis, foot condition, and abrasion report.

Elephant diet and watering schedule was not discussed during this inspection within the author's presence, but was discussed with the USDA. Foot care is performed as needed (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and two other elephant handlers (please refer to USDA report for names). Upon inspection of the trimming tools, items (including multiple new rasps of varying sizes) appear to be of good condition.

Per attending veterinarian (b)(6), (b)(7)(c), elephants are bred if they are healthy and have a healthy/functioning reproductive tract. Artificial insemination has been used to impregnate Bonnie, who gave birth to Barrack as a result.

Elephant Train Cars:

Train cars #1-4 are the only train cars to hold animals. #4 was not inspected and is used only for the transportation of animals other than elephants and tigers. Train car #1 is made to house three elephants- two within close contact of one another and a third on the opposite side of the car. Elephants face either forward or backwards and are paired according to their ability to tolerate one another. All four of the animal's legs are tethered during travel. Each train car holds 2-4 elephants, with Bonnie and Barrack separated in a room of their own.

A water tank is present and is tested once a year for "cleanliness" by a company in Florida per Ringling's general manager. The name of the company was unknown. The tank is filled as needed during rest stops. Water sources vary depending on location.

The first train car is heated by portable heater/air conditioner. The temperature is monitored by a staff member who rides between the elephants in the first train car. The remainders of the train cars are powered by electric heaters. The electricity is produced by generators on the train cars. Temperatures in the remaining three cars are also monitored by the attending staff member. Lighting and a sprinkler system is present and used as needed.

During transportation animals are fed and waters as normal. Water buckets are used and refilled from the tank via pump and hose as needed. All elephants are fed during a normal routine as per usual.

The inspection of the inside of the cars leads to findings of torn "Rhino-lining" on the base of the walls. These torn lining edges were jagged and sharp. It was mentioned to the Ringling general manager and recommended that it be repaired. Loose bolts, ledges, and ends of metal pieces on the wall were sharp on the edges and may cause abrasions to the elephants.

The height and length of the train car are 8'8" and 90' respectively. During a train ride from the northern states to Florida, the elephants are tethered until a stop in Birmingham, Alabama. At that point they are allowed to walk and exercise for 15 minutes and are reloaded onto trains for their Florida destination.

Elephant enrichment substrate:

Enrichment substrate used included tree trunks, branches, and rubber tires. Sugar canes are given as a substrate treat. Although sugar canes have cause injuries to elephants in the past, the attending veterinarian has stated that she did not recommend withholding sugar canes. She believed that injuries will occur no matter what enrichment substrate is given.

Tigers:

Twelve tiger are present within the same tent as the horses (1 horse and many miniature ponies), watusi(1), goats(2), donkeys (2), llamas (4), and dog (1). A gate with a drop cloth attached obstructed the tigers' view of the other animals. The tigers are fed an all-beef diet that is shipped once a week frozen from Cisco. The meat is kept in a refrigerator at 38 degrees F and run under cold water if needed to thaw. All beef is supplemented with Oasis vitamins.

During the day tigers are in their individual cages with ledges. Each cage is metal mesh and there are two vestibules for each set of four cages. Tigers are allowed into the vestibules and can mingle with other cats that tend to tolerate one another well. The cages have solid wall sides that can close when needed or while traveling. A thermometer is located within the cages but must be manually checked. The roof of the cages may lift up three feet to help ventilate the trailers. Additionally, a ventilation system and misting system is present on the roof to cool the occupants during the summer.

Tigers are transported via rolling cages from their cages to the circus ring. There are no practice performances. After practice they return immediately to their respective cages. There is no exercise pen available. Per staff members in some locations an exercise pen will be set up to allow time to walk outside of their cages.

All tigers are transported via trucks, not trains.

One tiger, Claudia seemed to exhibit stiffness while rotating in her transport cage to and from the inside of the united center before the show. Due to the confined space of the transport cage and lack of exercise arena, it was impossible to adequately evaluate the gait of the given animal.

Horses/Llamas/Goats/Watutsi/Miniture Horses:

All animals appear to be of appropriate body condition. One miniature horse was being treated for diarrhea and was kept in a separate pen. Medical treatment records support that treatment was being administered. All hair and fiber was long but well-kept. On inquiry it was told that they will be shaved in three weeks when they return to Florida. The horse's hooves were examined. A crack was present on the cranial aspect of the left forelimb. The farrier had ground down the hoof wall in at the base of the crack to prevent the hoof from further splitting. Farrier care is attempted to be provided every 5 weeks to all non-elephant hooved animals. Feed includes grass hay, alfalfa hay, and pelleted feed. All grass feed is purchased locally at each location. Hay is transported from location to location. All enclosures were clean and free of waste.

Medical records:

Medical records were only recorded on animals that had been found to have a problem by the handlers or veterinary staff. Healthy animals have no written annual examination reports, but vaccine records and blood work is available if performed. Medical records were randomly searched. SOAP's were kept extremely short and it was noted that many critical cases did not contain follow-up medical reports. When consulting Ringling's attending veterinarian, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) it was stated that follow-up reports were not always written. The attending veterinarian said she may be present twice a month, for the entire month, or twice a week. Veterinarian schedules vary and colleagues will speak over the phone for questions on medical cases. Medications are often dispensed by the veterinarians. When veterinarians are not present, in the past there had been no system in place to re-assure that medications were given. In defense, the attending veterinarian had stated that she knew the treatment had been given if the animal recovered. A treatment sheet-system has just been instated to assure that a technician or handler has administered medication to non-elephant animals. For an unknown reason this system has not been incorporated into use for elephants. There is no written indication as to when treatments have been discontinued, and no follow-up reports to some complex cases, such as colic in an elephant. (See USDA report for photographs of example medical records). All inspected medications were in-date.

Medical Records for personal traveling animals:

Rabies, distemper, heartworm tests, and feline leukemia/feline immunodeficiency virus tests records were collected and inspected for personal pets. All recorded animals are up to date and rabies vaccinations. Two cats received FVRCP vaccines but no rabies vaccination. Per written records, a second FVRCP was due on November 4, 2010, and a third FVRCP and Rabies vaccination was to be performed November 25, 2010. At this time neutering and spaying may also be performed. The veterinary technician (Flo) said the two cats were kittens and were too young to be vaccinated with rabies at that time.

No ages were written on any of the vaccine certificates. It had been advised that the ages of the animals should be written on the vaccine certificates in the future.

Summary:

1. Elephant train cars provide an abrasion hazard to the elephants.
2. Medical records are not thorough and do not adequately document follow-up care on Ringling Brother Animals
3. The delay of inspection caused the team to miss important morning animal care routines the USDA was interested in observing.
4. Foot care provided to elephants is inadequate. Ringling Brother elephant trainers failed to keep logs describing or dating foot pad trimming for each animal. It is recommended that additional trained staff be added to help provide appropriate foot care.
5. Proper medical care has not been given to address foot abscesses.
6. It is recommended that ages be a routine addition to vaccination certificates.
7. Assuring and recording ferrier visits are needed to prevent hooves from cracking and becoming infected.

Collections:

Vaccine certificates for Ringling Brother's staff personal animals have been provided and collected.